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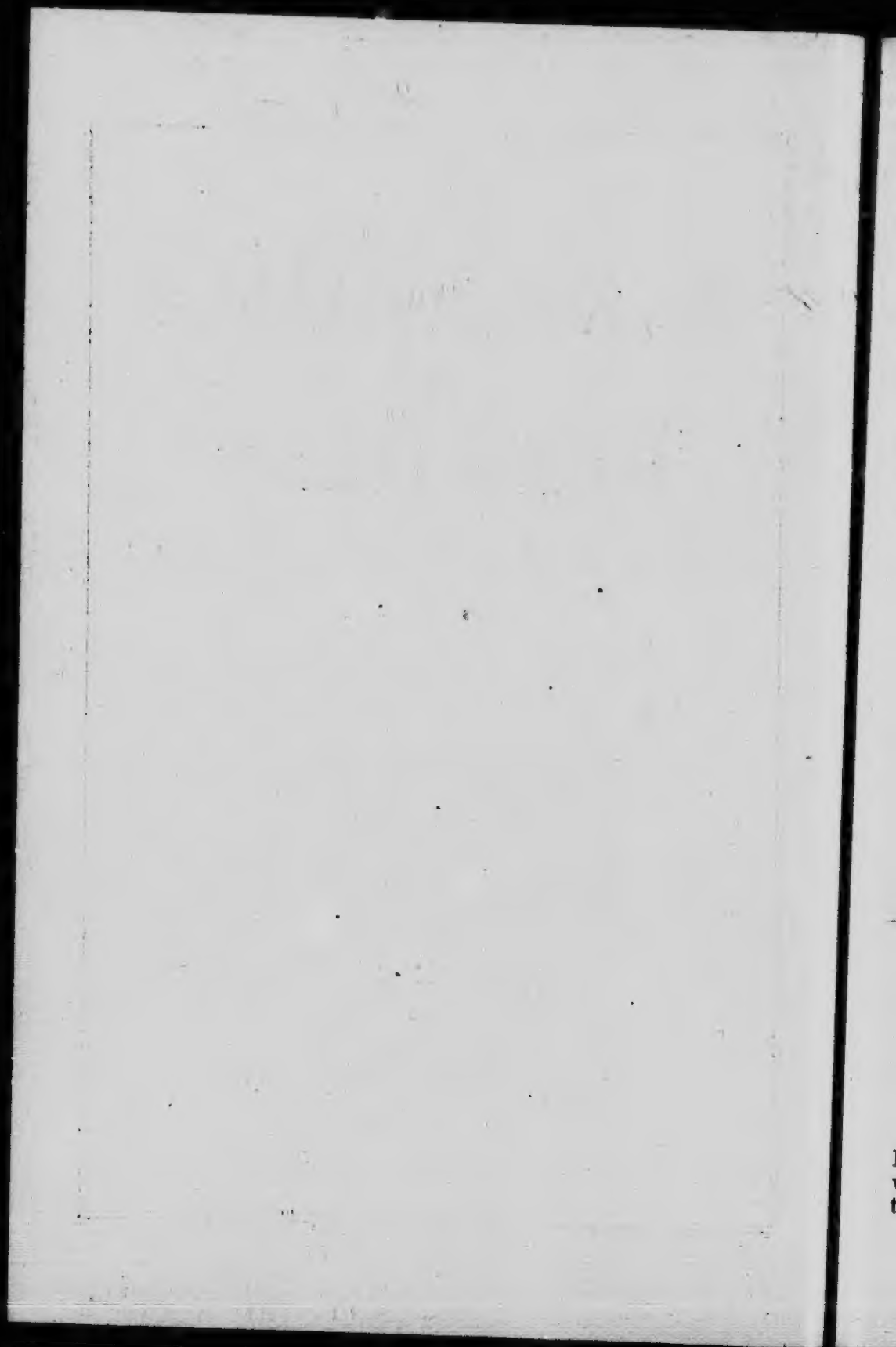
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Mr. Rowell's Address to Ontario Electors

**Provincial Elections
June 29, 1914.**

**GENERAL REFORM ASSOCIATION
FOR ONTARIO**

36 TORONTO ST., - TORONTO



MR. ROWELL'S ADDRESS TO ONTARIO ELECTORS.

"To the Electors of Ontario:

"The Legislature has been prematurely dissolved, and the Province has been put to the trouble and expense of a general election, not to serve any public interest, but to promote the political fortunes of the present Administration. The signs of disension and disintegration are everywhere manifest, and the Government prefers to take its chances now rather than a year and a half hence, when the public would understand the situation better. The important measures referred to by the Prime Minister in his manifesto are not controversial issues in the present contest.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION

"The Workmen's Compensation Act, after years of delay, has at last been passed, though not yet brought into operation; passed largely through the pressure brought to bear upon the Government by the Liberal members of the Legislature and the Labor interests of the Province.

"The only question before the electors in reference to workmen's compensation is whether this act shall be put into operation by the men who believe in a modern workmen's compensation law and have worked for it for years, or by a Government which has been forced to move every inch of the way it has travelled, and whether there shall be added to the provisions of the act an amendment to make provision for prompt medical attendance to all injured persons, commonly called 'first aid.'

GOOD ROADS MOVEMENT

"The Good Roads movement was initiated by the former Liberal Administration, and the demand for a general Province-wide measure was one of the planks in the Liberal platform at the last election.

"We are glad to note the Government is moving in the same direction. The only question is, Shall this advanced movement be planned and carried out by the men who have been for years advocating it, or by the Government which has been all too slow to move?

HYDRO-RADIAL PROPOSALS

"The Hydro-Radial proposals were first introduced into the Legislature by the Liberal Opposition, who have been arousing the Government to take action. Hon. Adam Beck has always been a strong and enthusiastic advocate of Hydro-Radials; but that he had great difficulty in persuading his colleagues to move is known to everybody. We welcomed the Government's proposals, though tardily brought down; we supported the Hon. Adam Beck's bill in the Legislature; and we pledge ourselves to promote the development of Hydro-Radials throughout the Province.

NEW ONTARIO

"In New Ontario we have a territory larger by half than either of the Provinces of Saskatchewan or Alberta, and rich in natural resources. Its development and settlement constitutes one of our greatest opportunities and gravest responsibilities. Its settlement would bind together the East and the West, providing new markets for the manufacturers and business men of our cities and towns, and increased employment for our workingmen and the food supply for the consumers of the Province. While we are importing food products we have millions of acres yet untilled. We have spent and are spending millions of dollars on railways and new roads to open up the country. The only way we can maintain these great public works and get a return on our investments, the interest on which now constitutes a serious charge upon our revenue, is by settling the country. As it is, the Department of Colonization, under the Minister of Agriculture, has failed to grasp the importance or urgency of the problem. We propose to enter upon this policy of development and settlement as a business and patriotic enterprise, put the Department of Colonization under a Minister who will devote the necessary time and ability to this great task, and if the creation of a new department should prove necessary we will not hesitate to create it.

TO CONSERVE RESOURCES

"We disapprove of and protest against the alienation by the present Government of 3,000,000 acres of our finest land by way of land grants to railways, and we propose to put a stop to this

policy, and to conserve our resources for the people—our lands for the settlers.

"We protest against the financial waste of the present Government, of which Government House serves but as an illustration, while the Government last year cut down the grants to our rural public schools twenty-eight per cent.

AGRICULTURAL CONDITIONS

"The Departments of Agriculture and Education are the most important departments of our Government; but they have been treated as second-rate departments by the present Government. In a Province unsurpassed in natural advantages for mixed farming, and with a consuming population demanding more than we are producing, we are faced with a steady decline in our rural population, and a diminution, in more recent years, in our food production. With the decline in rural population has come a decline in the strength and vitality of the rural school and the rural church in many sections of the Province. The whole question of rural life presents a problem of great magnitude and importance, of which the present Government does not appear to be cognizant, but which we must face and solve if we are to preserve our national strength and vitality.

"Our most urgent need at the present time is a Minister of Agriculture possessing the qualities of leadership, with a thorough understanding of the agricultural situation, and the courage and capacity to co-operate with the agricultural interests of the Province in progressive movements to remedy and improve existing conditions. We promise, if returned to power, to put at the head of the department the best man to be found in the Province of Ontario, whether elected at this general election or not.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

"The Department of Education, under the present Government, has lost the confidence of the people. A Conservative newspaper has pointed out that the Minister has his eyes on the ballot box rather than on the schools of the Province. If our educational problems are to be solved, if our educational progress is not to be further retarded, we must have a Minister of Education with modern educational ideals, and with courage and capacity and sympathy to work out the grave educational problems of this Province. Our greatest difficulties arise not so much from our

laws as from the regulations of the department and the manner in which the Minister administers them. We promise, if returned to power, to put at the head of this department the best qualified man to be found in Ontario.

PROBLEMS OF THE CITY

"While our rural population has been steadily declining in the older counties of the Province, our urban population has been continuously and rapidly increasing. With the growth of our cities we are compelled to face problems of the modern city in all industrial communities, viz., the rich growing richer and the poor poorer; a rapid rise in real estate values, making it exceedingly difficult for the workman to own his own home, and imposing a great additional burden upon the businessman; the inflation of real estate values, a tax upon the labor and industry of the future, which will weigh most heavily on those least able to bear it; insufficient and insanitary housing accommodations; congested areas; slum conditions; thousands of women and girls, who are to be the mothers of the next generation, employed in shops and factories, many of them under unsatisfactory conditions of employment, both as to hours of labor and wages; sickness and old age, without the resources to meet the latter; the blighting and destructive influences of the open bar, which tends to thwart every effort at improvement; and the social and moral degeneracy which inevitably follows these conditions.

MUST NOT DRIFT

"We must not pursue the policy of drift. In a country as rich as ours in natural resources, with the great production of wealth which we enjoy, it should be possible so to adjust our social and economic relations as to permit every honest, industrious toiler to earn, as a minimum, sufficient to provide a home, to feed, clothe, and educate his family properly, and to lay by something for a rainy day. This is not possible to many to-day in our great centres of population; and the number will rapidly increase as our cities continue to grow. We must face the situation and deal with it as patriots and Christians.

THE LIBERAL PROGRAM

"Should we not by sane and just legislation and administrative action seek to remedy the conditions which now exist and to prevent the further development in the cities and towns of Ontario of those social and industrial conditions which statesmen and social reformers in other lands are so heroically endeavoring to solve?

To this great task we promise to devote our energies, believing that the highest duty of public men is to seek to promote the health, to enlarge the opportunities and to increase the comfort and happiness of the masses of the people. We have presented to the Legislature and the people during the past three sessions important and far-reaching proposals, indicating the first steps to be taken along this line of progress. I shall not take space even to enumerate them all here. They deal with the settlement of New Ontario and the improvement of our educational and agricultural conditions; reform in land taxation; a Department of Labor; enlarging the opportunities of women to help us solve our problems; social legislation to improve the conditions of the workers; stopping the alienation of the public domain, and the extravagance and waste and expenditure of public money, and the curtailment of the liquor traffic.

THE TEMPERANCE POLICY

"The following is the policy upon which we ask the electors to pass judgment:—

"(1) The immediate abolition of the bar, including therein the abolition of all hotel and club licenses and therewith the treating system.

"(2) Such other restrictions upon the residue of the liquor traffic as experience may show to be necessary to limit its operations and effective to remedy its evils. Local option to be maintained as a means of wiping out the residue of the retail sale where the electors so decide.

"(3) The strict enforcement of the law by officials in sympathy with law enforcement, and the elimination of political influence from the administration of the law.

"(4) The regulation and inspection of all houses of public entertainment so as to insure reasonable accommodation for the travelling public.

"This policy means:

"Hotel liquor licenses. Every one wiped out. This means that liquor cannot be sold anywhere on the premises.

"Club liquor licenses. Every one wiped out.

"Treating system. Abolished.

"Shops are dealt with, but in a different way from bars:

"(1) They will come under further restrictions.

"(2) They can be wiped out by local option on a majority vote where the electors so decide.

"(3) New shop licenses cannot be issued in the place of bar licenses abolished.

"Note:—In nine-tenths of the municipalities of the Province there are at present no shop licenses.

"IN NINE-TENTHS OF THE MUNICIPALITIES, THEREFORE, OUR POLICY MEANS THE COMPLETE ABOLITION OF THE RETAIL SALE OF LIQUOR.

"The pledge I made in 1911 is now redeemed, and the responsibility rests upon the electors of this Province to say whether the open bar shall continue in our midst or be forever wiped out.

"I now make this further promise and pledge to the electors of the Province:

"If the electors express their approval of this policy by returning us to power, in the next session of the Legislature legislation will be enacted which will give full effect to the policy I have laid before you.

IS POLICY OF TEMPERANCE FORCES

"The policy we propose is that adopted unanimously, irrespective of party affiliations, by the organized temperance and Christian forces of the Province in the year 1902, and pressed upon the successive Governments of the Province from that day to this. In the manifesto of the Dominion Alliance, preceding the general election of 1908, the following statement appears:

"We again affirm that the legislation which the situation demands, which public opinion will warrant, and which the Legislature should pass, is for the abolishment of the barroom and the treating system, and drinking in clubs, and the imposition of such other restrictions upon the liquor traffic as would most effectively curtail its operations and remedy its evils.

"This was repeated in the manifesto of 1911.

"That for which the organized temperance and Christian forces of the Province have worked and prayed for years is now within their reach, and it rests with them to say whether the open bar shall be continued or forever wiped out. We are fighting the organized liquor interests and all the money and resources they can command. Now is the most critical hour in the fight. On which side will your vote and influence be cast? For the liquor interests and the open bar, or for the boy, the home, the Church, the State? I believe the conscience of Ontario is against the open bar. To that conscience I appeal with confidence. Every vote cast in this election is a vote for or against the bar. Which will yours be? We are fighting your fight. We ask every man and every woman to do their utmost from now until June 29; and if you do, the open bar in Ontario will be forever wiped out."

W. O. Powell

